

# Natural Resources and Environmental Issues

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Volume 9 *University Education in Natural Resources*

Article 15

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2002

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### Recommended Citation

Berkson, Jim; Murphy, Brian; and Newcomb, Tammy (2002) "Encouraging critical thinking about advocacy," *Natural Resources and Environmental Issues*: Vol. 9 , Article 15.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/nrei/vol9/iss1/15>

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## **ENCOURAGING CRITICAL THINKING ABOUT ADVOCACY**

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**ABSTRACT:** Advocacy is a common topic in the literature. All graduates in natural resource sciences will have to face decisions regarding advocacy at some time. Unfortunately, we do little to prepare them for those decisions. Much of the literature says either we all must be advocates or none of us should be advocates. The reality is that there are jobs for people who want to be advocates and jobs for people who don't. It's crucial that

students start to think critically about the role they want advocacy to play in their future. In this workshop we will introduce the participants to an exercise that quickly moves students beyond avoiding advocacy to a point where they relate it to their own values. Objectives are to (1) Discuss how advocacy is portrayed in the literature; (2) Discuss how students think about advocacy; (3) Discuss what should be our goals regarding advocacy and students; (4) Present methods and exercises to encourage students to think critically about advocacy; and (5) Discuss alternative approaches. Audience participation will be ensured because we will break into small groups (about four people per group) and do an exercise requiring everyone's involvement. As this is such a controversial topic, it is bound to bring nearly everyone into the discussion. The discussions will be facilitated to encourage everyone's participation.